

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 4927

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: BE, MILI, PFOR, NATO

SUBJ: BELGIAN AMBASSADOR'S VIEWS ON NATO STANDARDIZATION

REFS: A. STATE 200959 DTG 222356Z AUG 75

B. USNATO 4901 DTG 101215Z SEP 75

C. STATE 176498 DTG 252330Z JUL 75

D. STATE 208189 DTG 022232Z SEP 75

E. STATE 211995 DTG 052351Z SEP 75

SUMMARY: AMB BRUCE'S INITIAL CONSULTATIONS WITH AMB DE STAERCKE (BELGIUM) REVEALED SUBSTANTIAL SUPPORT FOR INITIATIVE IN NAC TO IMPROVE NATO STANDARDIZATION.

DE STAERCKE WAS ESPECIALLY PLEASED AT FRANCE'S APPARENT WILLINGNESS TO PARTICIPATE IN DISCUSSIONS AND URGED US TO BRING THIS INITIATE TO THE NAC AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS UNEXPECTED (IN HIS MIND) OPENING. CONCERNING THE STEERING COMMITTEE, CONFIDENTIAL

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HE BELIEVED WE SHOULD AIM FOR A GOOD PROGRESS REPORT BY DECEMBER BUT NOT TRY TO MOVE SO FAST AS TO JEOPARDIZE CHANCES OF LONGER-TERM SUCCESS. END SUMMARY.

1. AMB BRUCE CALLED ON AMB DE STAERCKE (BELGIUM) SEPT 10 TO DISCUSS STANDARDIZATION ALONG LINES REF A. DE STAERCKE STATED "WE WELCOME" IDEA ADVANCED BY US TO IMPROVE STANDARDIZATION IN NATO AND THOUGHT IT MOST TIMELY IN VIEW OF SYG LUNS' STATEMENT AT PERMREPS LUNCHEON SEPT 9 (REF B) ON THE SUBJECT AND AMB DE ROSE'S POSITIVE RESPONSE TO THE EFFECT THAT FRANCE WOULD BE PREPARED TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS ENDEAVOR AT THE FIFTEEN.

2. CONCERNING FRANCE, DE STAERCKE BELIEVED THAT THE SITUATION IN PARIS IS "UNCERTAIN" CONCERNING GREATER INVOLVEMENT IN NATO STANDARDIZATION WORK. HE THOUGH SENTIMENT MIGHT BE FAVORABLE IN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (AND MAYBE THE ELYSEE) BUT PROBABLY LESS SO IN THE CASE OF PRIME MINISTER CHIRAC AND DEFENSE OFFICIALS. DE STAERCKE SAW FRENCH WILLINGNESS TO PARTICIPATE IN NAC DISCUSSIONS AS A VALUABLE FOOT IN THE DOOR, ALTHOUGH IT WILL REMAIN TO BE SEEN TO WHAT DEGREE THEY WILL PARTICIPATE FURTHER DOWN THE LINE WHEN DECISIONS BECOME MORE DIFFICULT.

3. DE STAERCKE NOTED THAT FRANCE'S ABSENCE FROM NATO INTEGRATED MILITARY STRUCTURE WILL POSE A PROBLEM FOR BELGIUM WHERE STANDARDIZATION IS A CONCERN OF THE DEFENSE MINISTRY. WHILE HAVING FRANCE DISCUSS THE MATTER IN THE NAC WOULD BE A SIGNIFICANT INITIAL SUCCESS, IN HIS VIEW THE NEXT PROBLEM WILL BE FINDING A WAY TO GET DEFENSE MINISTERS INVOLVED. APPARENTLY THINKING ALOUD, DE STAERCKE WONDERED ABOUT HAVING DEFENSE MINISTERS ALSO REPRESENTED AT NAC MINISTERIAL DISCUSSION OF STANDARDIZATION. IN ANY CASE, DE STAERCKE BELIEVED THAT ONCE NATO ACCEPTS THIS TASK, THE OBJECT MUST BE TO SUCCEED, NOT MOVE QUICKLY.

4. IN RESPONSE TO AMB BRUCE'S QUESTION ABOUT THE COMPOSITION AND PURPOSE OF THE PROPOSED STEERING COMMITTEE, DE STAERCKE COMMENTED THAT WE SHOULD AIM FOR A GOOD PROGRESS REPORT TO MINISTERS IN DECEMBER AND NOT TRY TO FORCE SOLUTIONS TO THE MANY DIFFICULT ISSUES WHICH WILL ARISE AND REQUIRE TIME FOR ALLIES TO WORK OUT. IN THIS REGARD, HE BELIEVED EUROGROUP'S ROLE WILL BE AN IMPORTANT ISSUE WHICH MIGHT BE HANDLED BY SOME CONFIDENTIAL

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SORT OF AD HOC GROUP COORDINATING WITH THE STEERING COMMITTEE UNDER THE NAC.

5. CONCERNING THE TIMING OF THE INITIAL NAC MEETING TO DISCUSS STANDARDIZATION, DE STAERCKE THOUGHT IT SHOULD BE HELD AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, NOT LATER THAN NEXT WEEK. AMB BRUCE ASKED IF THIS WOULD ALLOW DE ROSE ENOUGH TIME TO GAIN MAXIMUM SUPPORT IN PARIS AND IF IT WOULD TAKE FULL ADVANTAGE OF SECRETARY SCHLESINGER'S FORTHCOMING VISIT TO PARIS. DE STAERCKE REPLIED THAT DE ROSE "WOULD BE READY" AND THAT MORE WOULD COME OUT OF SECRETARY SCHLESINGER'S PARIS VISIT IF THE NAC HAD ALREADY HELD INITIAL DISCUSSIONS ON STANDARDIZATION.

6. AMB BRUCE LEFT COPY OF TALKING POINTS (PREPARED IN ACCORDANCE
WITH REFS A AND E) WITH ATTACHMENT PROVIDING US VIEWS ON ESSENTIAL
BASIS FOR STANDARDIZATION WHICH DREW ON PARAS 6 A-H OF REF C.
BRUCE

CONFIDENTIAL

<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

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